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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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April 2011

President's Message

Scott Joseph, KI6YYZ

Hi All,

Do you have ideas for operating activities for the club? If you do, let's hear 'em!

The Vice-President Marcus KI6WDX would like for the club to try a fox hunt and I think it's an excellent idea.

Another idea has been to have a competition between the local radio clubs for number of contacts, Field Day style.

This hobby has many facets and you may find another avenue to explore.

That's all for now.

73,

Scott KI6YYZ

March Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by club president Scott KI6YYZ at 7:10 PM.

Treasurer's Report: General Fund = $2,426.54, Repeater Fund = $706.00, Prize Fund = $35.00 , Total = $3,167.54

Old Business: We have established a website now http://www.vacavalleyradio.net with plenty of room to expand. This new website is easy to remember and should help our club have a greater web presence.

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Antonio N6ZGB picked up his prize radio at the meeting and received a quick review of it with Larry W6OMF.

The 50/50 raffle was won by Larry W6OMF, congratulations Larry! Larry generously donated his $22 winning to the Repeater Fund.

After 20 minutes of social conversation about ham radio but meeting was adjourned at 8:09PM.

Project Vendors to Work With

By Marcus Maclean KI6WDX

www.panavise.com (Ask for John Palmer - Technical) www.randl.com (This place is back in Ohio, but I've found some really great radio & equipment deals from them!!)

My bad experience with Ham Radio Outlet when I was trying to buy antenna cable from their Sunnyvale store got even more complicated when I wrote to the main office out in Danville and the owner and his management never bothered to respond to my letter rather instead shoveling off the PR duties to another company person. When I couldn't be reached by telephone, the right thing to do should have been a letter from the business and/or business owner. I'll still buy from HRO, but it's minimal stuff if I can't get it elsewhere.

Great deals with R & L Electronics like buying a slightly used Yaesu HT model VX-6R triband radio (2, 1.25 & 70 cm) for $180 that had and still has a very slight scratch on the window face + the charger cable a little chewed up. But I bought a higher capacity battery for it from Batteries America, repaired the charger's power cable and I use it every Tuesday for the Net meeting from my front yard and again last night talking to you & Skip about today with the Diamond RH77CA antenna!

Bought a basically brand new Yaesu FT-7900R which replaced the 7800 radio and it was listed on their website in the used section as "it doesn't work". Left it on their website for 2 weeks and then inquired about it. "It doesn't work" the salesman said and when asked to be more specific, again, "it doesn't work" was his reply. Yaesu's bench hourly rate was $55 and so what could be possibly wrong with it? Bought it for it's advertised price of $125 and the repairs cost me just a "hair" over $54. Normal radio price is around $360. It's got a detachable front, is a dual bander w/ 5 hypermemory buttons and came with everything that a brand new one has including it's power cable.

Bought a Yaesu ATAS-120 screwdriver antenna that normally sells for around $360 to $400, but got this one for a mere $175. Just have to figure how best to mount it to the truck so I can take my Yaesu FT-450AT HF radio out to some hilltop and work the 6 bands it handles. Bought the 450AT from a guy who ran an ad on the QTH.com website

But I price shop between AES, HRO, Universal Radio, Ham City and R & L and I've found consistency with R&L in their pricing. Plus, no sales tax - just either UPS or USPS freight.

Which explains my Diamond 2 meter antenna collection, my 70 cm antennas and my one 6 meter antenna + the rotors. I'm hunting for a good price on some rotor control cable. 18/3 shielded w/ UV and rain protection. I'll find a good price soon and then I can mount my stacked pair of 2 meter antennas and my stacked 70 antennas and one 2 meter horizontal for my SSB operation & it's rotor.

Yeah, I know about the Pave Paws restriction, but I figure that if I aim the stacked 70 cm antennas out and down into the San Joaquin and Stanislaus valleys, the power restriction shouldn't apply since the restriction on power extends from a line starting from SF up to Reno and north to the Oregon border, I should be OK. I want to try and hit those repeaters up in the gold country foothills like Mariposa and above or south or at places like Lake Isabella or maybe try for Mammoth or Bishop. Or spin the stacked array around and go hunting down towards Coalinga, Parkfield & Paso Robles.

So check out the PanaVise place and the R & L Electronics store websites. Right now, I think R&L in their used section still shows a Yaesu VX-170 HT for sale for about $85. Next week if the weather holds, I'm hoping to mount my inverted V dipole alongside my house on the west side and each weekend barring any inclimate weather, hopefully get the others mounted. I'll let you know, OK?

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2009
ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Scott Joseph, KI6YYZ
Vice President: Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Tom Christman KE6MDM

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Open
Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Next project after I finish my home made Super J-pole from copper tubing will be either 4 or a 6 director elements for a 6 meter Yagi w/ 2 driven elements out of copper tubing!

I'm hoping it will work and it's gain will be "outa this world"

Special Guest Dean Straw is Coming!

We have a special meeting this month and will even be meeting on a special day. Our regular second Wednesday meeting is being moved this month to **Tuesday, April 26, 2011 at 7:00PM for board members with our General Meeting at 7:30PM.**

Dean Straw N6BV is a subject matter expert on many things involving amateur radio, antennas and propagation theory.

Our guest speaker has been a licensed radio amateur since 1959 at age 11, original call sign was WH6DKD. A graduate of Yale University with a degree in Electronics Engineering, Dean has authored several books including the ARRL Antenna Book with several editions as technology advances.

Dean retired from the ARRL in 2008 and resides in San Francisco.

Please join us for this very special speaker and presentation that I know everyone will enjoy.

To: Open Letter to all interested amateur radio operators
From: NARCC Spectrum Management Committee
Date: February 21, 2011

The Spectrum Management Committee (SMC) is a standing committee in NARCC. The committee is made up of representatives from all modes of communications used on frequencies above 29 MHz in Northern California, and the SMC has the task of ensuring that there is sufficient spectrum set aside for utilization by users of all modes, such as:

1) FM repeaters
2) Digital voice
3) Weak signal
4) Satellite communications
5) Packet
6) FM
7) AM
8) ATV
9) Moon bounce
10) And any other mode of communication that may be

used in the furtherance of the amateur radio hobby.

The committee is charged with examining each band and making recommendations as to spectrum utilization, offset splits, repeater segments, auxiliary frequencies and other parameters within the scope of the amateur bands and FCC Part 97 rules in effect addressing frequencies above 29 MHz. The SMC shall ensure that adequate spectrum is allocated with a minimum amount of interference to other users

According to the NARCC Policy and Procedures Manual, a document that governs how NARCC operates, the SMC shall review each band no less than once in any three (3) year period.

This open letter is written in the hopes of gathering those people interested in this very important mission who would like to get involved with the SMC and help us perform our task. We need folks from all segments of amateur radio activity above 29 MHz in Northern California to contact us, and join in the process. Your voice should be heard, and we welcome all interested parties who have a positive attitude toward moving spectrum management forward, and who have a genuine desire to help us make sure everyone and every known mode of operation is represented.

The SMC is comprised of basically three groups:

1) Those people in our Yahoo Chat Group, of which there are 67 at the present time, who are interested in helping to shape our recommendations on Spectrum, who interact by posting and commenting on the SMC Yahoo Group;

2) Those people in our Webinar Meeting Group, which meets every third Sunday afternoon at 4:00 PM for a 1 1/2 hour VoIP meeting, and average 8 at the present time. This meeting is where most of the activity is found by those seriously involved in the SMC;

3) Those people who do not necessarily want to participate in the activities of the SMC, but want to stay apprised of our activiy because the outcome may affect their areas of interest in the hobby;

Please contact the Chairman of the Spectrum Management Committee, Shorty K6J5I at spectrum@narcc.org if you would like to participate in any of the above venues, and help us deal with the issues we are facing, and participate in the solution.

Your opinion is important to our moving forward with the goal of helping to make a better amateur radio hobby, serving all of our needs. Please get involved and become part of the solution. Your voice counts, and we want to hear it.

ARRL East Bay Section
Section Manager: James R Latham, AF6AQ
af6aq@arrl.org

March for Babies 2011

The event this year is on Saturday, May 14th at Pena Adobe Park, same place as 2010. The W6VVR Vaca Valley Radio Club is proudly participating in this awareness fund raiser. Details will be discussed at our April meeting and over the air on our Tuesday night net meetings.

Amateur Radio Operator responds in a school emergency. - By Robert B.Gregory, AB4AL: Friday February 11, 2011, 4:45 PM;

Amateur Radio Operator KI6LCA, JoiAnn had arrived to pick her son up from school at the Charter School, Mare Island Technology Academy , MIT in Vallejo California . In her purse she carried her dual-band Amateur radio transceiver.

She was heading into the office to pick up her son who attends school there. Suddenly she heard approaching vehicles bearing down on the school perimeter at a high velocity. Screeching to a halt a vehicle blew a cloud of dust and a man emerged brandishing a weapon at perusing police cars.

Immediately JoiAnn knew what to do. JoiAnn is a School Secretary for the Vallejo Unified School District at Steffan Manor Elementary School and well practiced in school lockdown procedures in the event of eminent danger to students. Her first concern was to assess the danger and act appro-

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browse our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please email us at w6vvr@vacavalleyradio.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance.

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
http://www.vacavalleyradio.net
Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3

The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-)
WV6F 440.025(+)

priately. She announced to the staff and students that this is now a school lockdown situation. Running at top speed she and MIT Staff members cleared the grounds and halls of students to take cover in class rooms.

She switched on her radio transceiver which has the ability to receive police and fire dispatches to gain further information about the threat level. Amateur radio equipment is not designed to transmit on police or fire frequencies nor is it lawful to do so, but is able to receive their communications. Many Amateur Radio Operators have been trained how to respond and assist police and fire by providing vital information or support in the event of an emergency.

JoiAnn is a member of the North Bay Amateur Radio Association (NBARA http://www.nbara.org/) a strong organization dedicated to the skills of local and worldwide communication and emergency response assistance. JoiAnn recently was appointed by the president of the NBARA, Dan Muth to function as chairperson for coordinating the facilitation of amateur radio equipment to be installed at MIT under funding from Home Land Security. The staff of MIT was impressed when she was able to take her hand-held transceiver from her purse and understand the events that were unfolding yards away from the school.

Under the crescendo of gunfire erupting from the crime scene, she intercepted communication between an officer and a dispatcher wanting to know if the school was under lockdown and if a nearby school a few blocks away was under lockdown. The dispatcher informed the officer that MIT was secure and locked down but she was unable to contact the other school.

Upon hearing this communications KI6LCA placed a 911 call to dispatch and identified herself as a Vallejo Unified School District Secretary and that the school they were trying to contact did in fact have an after hours program, that the office staff had departed the campus. She informed the dispatcher that a Police Officer would need to respond to the school in person to start a lockdown procedure. The dispatcher inquired as to how JoiAnn knew of the inability of dispatch to make a contact by phone. JoiAnn identified herself as KI6LCA, an Amateur Radio Operator and a Secretary for VUSD, that she carries her communications equipment with her and has the ability to monitor police and fire and is trained in emergency communications procedures.

It was not until she saw the news report on television that night that she realized the grave danger the children faced. The individual who opened fire on the police and endangered the lives of children, school staff and neighbors living in the area will no longer act in such an inexcusable manner. His life was terminated by an Officer of the Law who was willing to risk his life in the face of gunfire on behalf of our safety.

My appreciation goes out to those who take the time to make a difference, to receive the training and to selflessly respond on our behalf. Thank you JoiAnn, the Staff of MIT and thanks to our officers who serve us.

Around the Shack

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

I added a radio to my shack this month. With the help of Skip AF6HC, Marcus KI6WDX, and Scott KI6YYZ I was able to finally activate a two meter FM transceiver with a J-Pole antenna at 25'.

I bought a used Kenwood TM-261A two meter transceiver on eBay and had the rest of what I needed around here. Once the radio was operational I decided to spend some time and identify just what repeaters I could work from here, then make a list of them and save the list.

I am able to work 21 different two meter repeaters from my QTH. With my list in hand, I made an excel doc and sent it to a few friends in the area.

Having spent over a month listening now I have observed that our repeater is one of the quieter repeaters around here. Not saying that's bad, I'm just making an observation.

Probably the busiest machine around here is the K6MVR repeater on Mt. Vaca sponsored by the Mt. Vaca Radio Club. That machine is busy day and night. Wow.

It's a lot easier now to work a DX station on my HF radio then tell Tom N6AJR about it so he can work him. Notice I worked the DX first before blabbering about it to others. No sense in creating more competition until the station is in my log, right!

At 14:35 UTC on 04 April I worked 9N7AN in Nepal on the 2Ø meter band CW. This was an extremely rare contact since I have never heard Nepal on the air before.

I knew there was a DXpediton on the air, but I could never hear them. I missed the Bangladesh group recently because although I knew they were there, I never heard them.

I noticed a spot for 9N7AN on a DX cluster and tuned it in while eating morning oatmeal. Although not very strong I attempted to work them. No joy. I listened a bit longer and had a cup of coffee and noticed their signal was getting stronger.

I tried again and worked them. THEN I spotted them making note that the signal was growing on the West Coast. The signal faded away within 20 minutes; a very short window opportunity that I was fortunate enough to hear just at the right time.

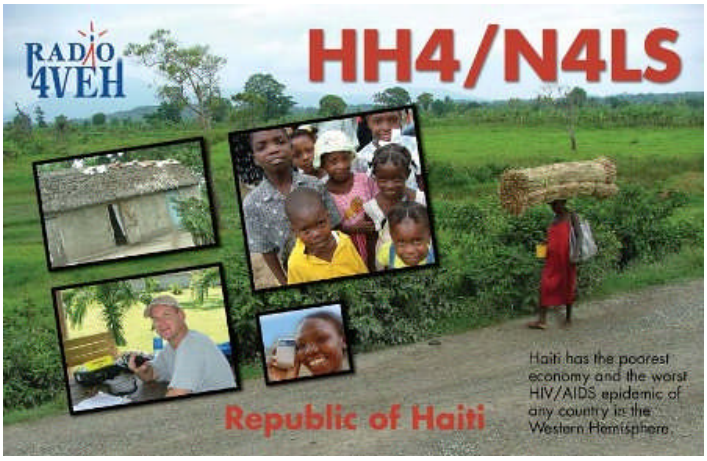
This evening as I write this the team updated their on line log reflecting that I had two contacts in their log. I must have worked them the first time and didn't hear them. Better to have my call sign in their log twice than not at all I suppose!

This evening 1Ø meters was wide open to the South Pacific. T31TU was on the air at 28.495 MHz USB from Eastern Kiribati working North America mostly. I thought, what a great opportunity for Technician Class operators to work DX.

The bands are open now. 73!

Amateur Radio in the 25th Century

Amateur Radio Today!



PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely

Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues ----------$20.00 _____
Each Family Member ---$ 2.00 _____
Student ----------$ 5.00 _____
Repeater/Autopatch donation--- _____
Call/Name badge ---------$10.00 _____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues----------$37.00 _____
Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.

Total---------- _____
Paid by CASH: ____ Check #_____
DATE:_____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143